

House Bill 1011

By: Representatives Buckner of the 130th, Walker of the 107th, and Mosley of the 178th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Chapter 5A of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department of Community Health, so as to provide for a pilot program to test and evaluate a system of coverage for costs associated with the prevention and treatment of lymphedema; to provide for program eligibility; to provide for coverage requirements; to provide for data collection; to provide for duration of the pilot program; to provide for an evaluation report on the pilot program; to provide for automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 5A of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department of Community Health, is amended by adding a new Code section to the end of such chapter to read as follows:

"31-5A-7.

(a) The department shall establish a pilot program to test and evaluate a system of coverage for costs associated with the prevention and treatment of lymphedema, a chronic condition requiring lifelong management. Such pilot program shall include a component for the system of medical assistance established pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 and for the state employees' health insurance plan established pursuant to Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45. The purpose of such pilot program shall be to identify costs to the state and measure health benefits to the pilot participants in order to determine whether to provide such coverage on a permanent basis to all Medicaid recipients and all state employees with state health coverage.

(b) The pilot program shall include a minimum number of participants from each coverage program to effectuate statistically significant data in which to make the determination referenced in subsection (a) of this Code section. Any person who is eligible to be a

1 recipient of medical assistance under Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 or who is eligible
2 for and has elected coverage under the state employees' health insurance plan established
3 pursuant to Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45 shall be eligible to participate in the pilot
4 program. The department may establish procedures for determining which recipients may
5 become participants in a pilot program. Priority of participation in the pilot program shall
6 be given to those with the greatest medical need with regard to lymphedema, the greatest
7 financial need, or both.

8 (c) To the extent funding is available, the pilot program shall provide coverage for the
9 following, if ordered by a physician, for patients diagnosed with lymphedema:

10 (1) A maximum of 20 treatment sessions per year with a nationally certified lymphedema
11 therapist. Such sessions shall not count against any other annual or lifetime limit of
12 physical, speech, occupational, or other therapy sessions;

13 (2) Two sets of compression garments per year. A set shall include two compression
14 garments, one to be used for daytime wear and one to be used for nighttime wear; and

15 (3) Other treatments or medical devices, as determined by the department.

16 (d) The department shall produce and maintain records and data relating to the pilot
17 program to assist in the evaluation of the program. The department shall solicit and collect
18 input from physicians, physical therapists, certified lymphedema therapists, and other
19 health care providers on the operation of the pilot program.

20 (e) The department shall take whatever action is necessary to begin operation of a pilot
21 program no later than July 1, 2006, including enrolling individual participants. The pilot
22 program shall continue to operate until June 30, 2011.

23 (f) No later than January 1, 2011, the department shall contract with an independent
24 organization with expertise in the area of health care and policy to produce a report
25 regarding the evaluation and results of the pilot program. Such report shall include:

26 (1) Costs to the state to provide coverage for lymphedema prevention and treatment to
27 recipients of medical assistance under Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 and to
28 individuals receiving health care coverage under the state employees' health insurance
29 plan established pursuant to Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45;

30 (2) Health benefits to participants in the pilot program resulting from prevention and
31 treatment; and

32 (3) A recommendation as to whether such coverage should be extended on a permanent
33 basis to all Medicaid recipients and all state employees with state health coverage.

34 Such report shall be completed and submitted to the General Assembly no later than
35 December 31, 2011.

36 (g) This Code section shall be automatically repealed on December 31, 2011."

1 **SECTION 2.**

2 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
3 without such approval.

4 **SECTION 3.**

5 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.